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This special issue of the *Journal of Computer and System Sciences* is devoted to selected papers that appeared in preliminary form in the *Proceedings of the 26th Annual ACM Symposium on the Theory of Computing* (STOC), sponsored by the ACM Special Interest Group for Algorithms and Computation Theory (SIGACT), and held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, May 23–25, 1994. The authors of these four papers were invited to submit finished versions of their conference extended abstracts, which were then refereed according to the usual standards of the *Journal of Computer and System Sciences*. We thank the authors for contributing their papers to this special issue, the referees for their time and effort, and Michael T. Goodrich for assisting us as Advisory Editor.

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